

DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION

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July 14, 1995

To: Delta Protection Commission

From: Margit Aramburu, Executive Director

Subject: Staff Report on Grant Programs for Restoration and Enhancement of Waterfowl Habitat on Private Lands in the Legal Delta

Background:

At the January 26, 1995 meeting, the Commission voted affirmatively to participate as partners in granting funds received by Ducks Unlimited for waterfowl habitat enhancement within the Legal Delta.

At the April 27, 1995 meeting, the Commission reviewed criteria for the grants program.

On May 19, 1995, the staff sent to each Commissioner a copy of the grant program application form and a two page memo outlining the grant program and criteria for evaluation of the applications.

Purpose of the Grant Program:

The purpose of the grant program is to restore and enhance waterfowl habitat on private lands in furtherance of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Implementation Plan (Plan). The Plan promotes:

- * protection of existing wetlands through perpetual easements or fee-title purchases;
- * restoration and protection of historic wetlands;
- * enhancement of existing wetlands;
- * annual enhancement of private agricultural lands for feeding and nesting waterfowl.

The Plan further states that the enhancement of waterfowl wetland habitat may include:

- * management actions (supplemental funding, construction, or technical assistance) that promote wetland availability (e.g. summer flooding; prolonged winter flooding);
- * desirable plant and invertebrate communities;
- * optimal foraging depths for a variety of waterfowl species;
- * desirable spatial patterns of wetland vegetation and wetland types; and
- * disease control efforts.

Notice of Grants Program:

The notice of the grants program was subject of an article in the Rio Vista River News Herald and was sent to all parties on the Commission's mailing list, which includes Reclamation Districts in the Primary Zone of the Delta.

Applications:

The Commission and Ducks Unlimited received eight applications for grants. A brief description of each application is attached (see Exhibit A). Copies of the applications will be available at the Commission meeting.

Evaluation of the Grant Applications:

Each of the applications was evaluated in light of the ten criteria outlined in the grant application form (see Exhibit B). The location of the project sites is shown in Exhibit C.

All of the applications met the first six criteria.

Regarding the last four criteria:

1. Projects proposed by private landowners will be ranked higher:

All applications are proposed by private landowners.

2. Projects which carry out the goals of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Plan as to acreage and habitat type will be ranked higher:

The Senator Outing Duck Club, Skyraker Duck Club, Laurel G Duck Club and H Pond Duck Club projects would create areas of differing elevation which would allow management for feeding and foraging areas. The Winter Island flood gate project would fund installation of a new water control structure to control water elevation and quality. The Chadock project would fund undefined improvements to an existing pond.

3. Projects that serve wintering waterfowl will be ranked highest; habitat for waterfowl will be ranked higher than other types of habitat:

All the projects would serve wintering waterfowl.

4. Projects that maximize the use of the grant money by seeking additional sources of funding for the proposed project will be ranked higher:

Neither Chadock project, Laurel G Duck Club, H Pond Duck Club, nor Winter Island Duck Club would use additional sources of funding.

An additional issue was raised by the DU staff in the evaluation of the grant applications. DU indicated that project sites subject to these grants should be permanently protected, for example, through an easement. Senator Outing Duck Club, Skyraker Duck Club, Laurel G Duck Club, and H Pond Duck Club are all subject to a State or federal easement. Medford Island will be placed under a permanent easement under the Wetland Reserve Program. Winter Island is currently negotiating with the Department of Fish and Game regarding an easement. The Chadock project is not subject to such an easement.

Commission Action:

The Commission should hold a public hearing and receive public comments on the proposed projects.

At the close of the public hearing, staff will present a recommendation, and the Commission should make a final recommendation regarding the projects to be funded and the level of funding.

EXHIBIT A: Summary of Submitted Grant Applications:
(Note: The summaries are in no particular order.)

Senator Outing Duck Club:

Location: Yolo County in the Yolo Bypass.

Duck Club: 480 acres

Proposed Work: Excavate ditch, remove cross levee, excavate drainage swales, install water control structures.

Funds Requested: \$10,000

Other Sources: Club-\$8,500; USFW-\$10,000

Total Project Cost: \$28,000

Skyraker Duck Club:

Location: Yolo County in the Yolo Bypass.

Duck Club: 340 acres

Proposed Work: Replace eight water control structures; excavate swales, remove cross levee, create habitat islands.

Funds Requested: \$4,500

Other Sources: Club-\$4,500; USFW-\$9,000

Total Project Cost: \$18,000

Medford Island:

Location: San Joaquin County.

Wetland Reserve Program: 231.5 acres

Proposed Work: Convert agricultural lands to wetlands; install 13 water control structures, modify one siphon, install one siphon, grade; excavate new irrigation ditch, 54 acres of "vegetative work".

Funds Requested: \$18,700

Other Sources: SCS - \$112,200, Medford Island - \$18,700

Total Project Cost: \$149,600

Exhibit A

Laurel G Duck Club:

Location: Yolo County, Yolo Bypass

Duck Club: 500 acres

Proposed Work: Excavate ponds, construct exterior levees.

Funds Requested: \$4,500

Total Project Cost: \$9,000

H Pond Duck Club:

Location: Yolo County, Yolo Bypass

Duck Club: 500 acres

Proposed Work: Install three water control structures; build up existing levee; excavate drainage ditches.

Funds Requested: \$2,500

Total Project Cost: \$5,000

Winter Island Duck Club-Flood Gate:

Location: Contra Costa County

Duck Club: 627 acres

Proposed Work: Install 42-inch flood gate in west levee to control water quality and circulation.

Funds Requested: \$14,500

Total Project Cost: up to \$29,000

Randy and Danielle Chadock:

Location: Sutter Island, Sacramento County

Private Lands:

Proposed Work: Improvements to existing pond.

Funds Requested: \$10,000

Total Project Cost: \$20,000

**THE PROPOSED PROJECTS MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING
CRITERIA:**

- * The project is on privately-owned land.
- * The project site is within the Legal Delta.
- * The project can be completed before March 1, 1996.
- * The applicant must be prepared to sign a site specific management agreement with Ducks Unlimited.
- * The applicant must be prepared to provide a 50-50 match, in cash or in in-kind labor, to the grant.
- * The applicant is willing to accept responsibility for operation and management of the project.

**THE PROPOSED PROJECTS WILL ALSO BE RANKED AS TO HOW THEY MEET
THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

- * Projects proposed by private landowners will be ranked higher.
- * Projects which carry out the goals of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Plan as to acreage and habitat type will be ranked higher.
- * Projects that serve wintering waterfowl will be ranked highest; habitat for waterfowl will be ranked higher than other types of habitat.
- * Projects that maximize the use of the grant money by seeking additional sources of funding for the proposed project will be ranked higher.

Exhibit
B

